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STATE OF NEVADA
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AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

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MINUTES

Name of Organization: Subcommittee on Communication Services for
Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and
Persons with Speech Disabilities of the Nevada
Commission on Services for Person with Disabilities
(Nevada Revised Statute [NRS] 427.750)

Date and Time of Meeting: June 27, 2011
9:30 A.M.

Location: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center
999 Pyramid Way
Sparks, NV 89431

I. Welcome and Introductions Linda Raymond, Subcommittee Chairperson

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m.

Members Present: Betty Hammond, Merideth Aurs, Karen Pearl, Myron Goldman, Linda
Raymond, Jana Spoor, Denise Phipps, and Catherine Bennett

Absent: Catherine Pearce

Excused: Dennis Granata

Guests: Edina Jambor, Executive Director for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy
Resource Center (DHHARC); David Strom, Sprint Representative; Jeff Beardsley;
David Daviton

State Staff Present: Lisa Jones

Interpreters: Daniel and Alayne from ASL Communications, Karla Johnston, and
Gerianne Hummel

A moment of silence was observed for the loss of a community member and subcontractor for Sprint, Mark Finn, who will be missed by all those who know of him.

II. Approval of the Minutes from the November 19, 2010, Meeting*
Linda Raymond, Subcommittee Chairperson

Ms. Spoor made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Pearl seconded, and the minutes were accepted.

Ms. Aurs requested corrected spelling of her first name ("Merideth" rather than "Meredith" going forward). Ms. Jones agreed to make the correction now and going forward and apologized for the oversight.

III. Nomination/Election of New Officers *
Linda Raymond, Subcommittee Chairperson

Ms. Hammond nominated Ms. Spoor for the position of chairperson, with a second from Ms. Pearl. Ms. Bennet declined to be nominated for the position of chairperson. Ms. Spoor was approved as the new chairperson.

Ms. Spoor nominated Ms. Bennett for the position of Vice Chairperson, and Ms. Bennett declined the nomination. Ms. Hammond nominated Mr. Goldman for this position, and he also declined. Mr. Goldman nominated Ms. Raymond for the position of Vice Chairperson, and she accepted the nomination. Ms. Raymond nominated Ms. Pearl for this position, and she declined the nomination. Ms. Raymond was approved as the new Vice Chairperson.

IV. Chairperson Will Lead Subcommittee Discussion on the Following: Solicit Recommendations From the Subcommittee For Any Changes They Would Like to See in the Language of the Subcommittee Bylaws*
Linda Raymond, Subcommittee Chairperson

Ms. Hammond, with the assistance of Ms. Jones, explained that the agency's attorney has recommended that this and other subcommittees of the Commission for Services for Persons with Disabilities (CSPD) consider whether they wish to include in their bylaws a requirement that the subcommittee membership include a member of the CSPD. Ms. Jones clarified that such membership is not required by statute or other regulations, but rather it has been suggested in order to facilitate communication between the CSPD and the subcommittee. Ms. Hammond explained that this is currently achieved by reporting activities back to the CSPD.

David Daviton, a member of the public audience, suggested that the subcommittee solicit feedback from the community on its bylaws and that perhaps the bylaws could be streamlined somewhat.

Ms. Pearl suggested not changing status quo unless it adds value to the subcommittee, adding that she did not see value in it. Ms. Raymond stated she thought the bylaws should be left as is until the subcommittee finds it necessary to make any changes.

Ms. Spoor moved that we continue to use the bylaws that are currently in place, and this was seconded by Mr. Goldman. The motion carried.

V. Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) Staff Report and Possible Action in Response (such as statements of committee support or consensus)*
Betty Hammond, Aging and Disability Services Division

- Present and Discuss the Public Utilities Budget for The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center (DHHARC) and Relay Nevada for Fiscal Year 2012

Ms. Hammond reported to the subcommittee that the adjusted total of \$1,682,004 for the budget for Fiscal Year 2012 was approved by the Public Utilities Commission. Ms. Raymond asked for clarification as to which of the five subcommittee meetings budgeted are to be in person and which are to be videoconferenced, and Ms. Hammond stated any of these meetings could be in person or via videoconference, depending on which would best meet the needs of the members.

Linda Raymond asked that on page one, the title "Services for Speech and Hearing Impaired" be changed to read "Services for Speech and Hard of Hearing" instead of using the words "hearing impaired." Ms. Hammond clarified that this may be the title of the program as outlined in NRS but agreed to change the wording if possible.

Ms. Hammond explained that the program budgets have stayed even and the fund has a surplus, but it is expected that the surcharge will need to be increased as the funds deplete. She also noted that unspent funds stay in the account.

- Present and Discuss Goals and Objectives for Communication Services Programs

Ms. Hammond discussed the Goals and Objectives for the Service Programs. She explained that the desires of the subcommittee, numbers and information from last year's accomplishments, along with a staff retreat from DHHARC were all considered in developing the Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2012 (FY 12).

David Strom had comments on increasing the number of CapTel phones that should be distributed. Advertisements planned may increase the number of CapTel phones distributed. Ms. Jambor clarified that DHHARC staff was already operating at maximum capacity. Mr. Strom stated that WCI (Weitbrecht Communications, Inc.) and Sprint personnel could assist in the distribution of equipment. Ms. Jambor replied that then the persons receiving the equipment would rely on DHHARC staff to train them in the use of the equipment.

Mr. Daviton noted that the clients who need the equipment are the ones to suffer if fewer phones are distributed. He recommended we have a work group look at the situation and also use the funds currently available. Ms. Hammond explained the reason for a cap on the distribution of CapTel machines is due to the expense of the growing number of minutes the program has to pay for and that the cap was increased this year due to waiting lists. She emphasized that waiting lists prove need. Ms. Hammond also stated she plans to discuss this further with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and suggested that perhaps WCI could do all the distribution and DHHARC could train those who need it; but this would have to be negotiated among all parties. Ms. Raymond agreed with WCI doing all of the distribution so that the waiting lists could be eliminated.

Ms. Pearl asked for clarification in discussions with the PUC, specifically whether the agency is locked into the approved budget. Ms. Hammond explained that if a need arises mid-year or any time, the Division can approach the PUC with newly identified needs. Ms. Pearl recommended we give the PUC prior notice that the need may increase prior to going in for further budget talks. Mr. Strom clarified that WCI has a very effective customer service and support system in place.

Mr. Daviton expressed concern about losing funds from the telecommunications fund. Ms. Hammond explained that other states have taken money from telecommunications funds. She explained how some states have taken measures to save money in case they have to be responsible for Video Relay Services (VRS).

Ms. Phipps commented regarding Objective number 6.03 that her CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) provision company is working closely with two hospitals on the East Coast, and they are finding the disability liaisons do not realize there are communication services available (*i.e.*, remote CART services), so she explained remote CART is very effective in medical settings as the patients can be afforded privacy that they may not otherwise have with the CART provider present in the room with them. She expressed a desire to help achieve the goal for our state. Ms. Raymond asked if we could include Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) in the goal. She also asked if there is a way to get the hospitals to understand they should contract with more than one Interpreter Referral Agency.

Ms. Raymond commented regarding Objective 2.02, wondering whether we could add cultural sensitivity training in legal settings, such as courthouses and law offices. Ms. Hammond said this is covered in Objective 6.02. Ms. Raymond stated she would like to see the words about Cultural Sensitivity mentioned in that goal.

Ms. Phipps wanted clarification about who pays for the CART/Interpreter services. Ms. Jambor stated the topic is explained in the sensitivity training. Mr. Daviton commented it is not uncommon for courts to order Deaf persons to treatment or Anger Management courses and then not think of providing the interpreter—while the providers of the class claim to be unable to pay for interpreter services.

Ms. Hammond asked the subcommittee to continue to review the goals and objectives and let her know if they have ideas for improving them or changes they would like incorporated.

- Discuss Ideas Regarding Promotional Items for Relay Nevada

Ms. Hammond solicited ideas for promotional items for Relay Nevada (RN). Ms. Raymond recommended RN buy and give away T-shirts, and Mr. Daviton suggested including information about the subcommittee for the public. Mr. Strom wondered if we should use media outlets such as public service announcements on television and radio. Mr. Daviton expressed a preference for the “Taste of Technology” (TOT) events.

Ms. Jambor stated we need a way to attract people to the TOT events and said we need to better promote the event for better attendance. Ms. Bennett suggested sending out post cards to people to encourage attendance. Ms. Pearl recommended advertising on websites, stating although she is unsure of the technical way that local people can be targeted she likes the idea. Mr. Daviton suggested newspaper ads, or a Post-It type advertising mailer. Mr. Beardsley liked the idea of having a visual for people. Ms. Hammond suggested maybe the Wednesday sales fliers would work for that purpose.

VI. Relay Nevada Report and Possible Action in Response (such as committee request for specific outreach activities)*

David Strom, Sprint Representative

- Information Regarding Numbers of Calls Into Relay Nevada

Mr. Strom reported that traditional relay numbers (for Telecommunications Relay Services, or TRS) continue to decline as CapTel minutes continue to increase. He made a comparison between the monthly total number of TRS minutes at the beginning of the fiscal year (at 25,000 minutes) to the most recent monthly minutes (totaling about 17,000). For CapTel minutes, the average number of minutes started at 20,000 per month and has gone up to about 50,000 a month. He stated the numbers could increase more without the cap on the number of phones we can distribute.

- Discuss Outreach Efforts and Solicit Ideas for Future Outreach Efforts

Mr. Strom stated that 26 outreach events occurred this year, including four TOT events throughout Nevada—in Reno, Las Vegas, Pahrump and Elko. Some of the events were in conjunction with PACE (Public Awareness Collaboration Event) programs with other consumer focused agencies. He stated with the loss of Mark Finn, Sprint Relay is looking to fill a position for someone to do focused outreach for CapTel products and services. Mr. Strom stated Sprint would like to hire and work with someone with hearing loss and/or hearing loss knowledge. He reported we have about \$2,500 left in the outreach budget for the end of Fiscal Year 2011. Mr. Strom stated we have RN giveaways and printed material left to distribute and that the Relay Nevada Website was updated and encouraged members to view it.

Mr. Strom stated he looks forward to working with the Outreach specialists at DHHARC in addition to the work he does with DHHARC to train new CapTel users. He spoke about various outreach efforts in conjunction with these activities: Communication Arts Camp, Camp Signshine, Taste of Technology, CCSD (Clark County School District), etc. Mr. Strom expressed a desire to make Relay Nevada more visible to the general public through efforts such as radio and TV spots. Mr. Strom thanked DHHARC for allowing Relay Nevada to store some promotional items. This includes a display stand that DHHARC could utilize with a banner of their own if they so desired.

VII. Report Regarding Activities of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center (DHHARC)

Edina Jambor – Executive Director of DHHARC

Ms. Jambor explained DHHARC is close to end of their Fiscal Year which is June 30, 2011. She states the agency exceeded its equipment distribution goals, as there is a great demand for equipment. The goal for CapTel was to distribute 168 machines, however they have distributed over 200. They met the goal for distributing TTYs, also. DHHARC has worked with David Strom and Relay Nevada on the PACE events. The agency distributed post cards to get the name of the agency and inform the public about their services. They have also taken out newspaper ads to the same end.

Ms. Jambor reported that DHHARC has also met its goals for advocacy, although they have struggled with providing workshops for the community. The agency is considering cancelling the workshops due to low attendance. In addition, DHHARC's Website crashed, but the webmaster is trying to rebuild a site for the agency and use more visual information, perhaps including the use of a VLOG (video blog) on their Website.

Mr. Strom expressed concern about the high turnover rate of staff in the Las Vegas DHHARC office. Miss Jambor stated that due to confidentiality issues she cannot go into details, but stated staff has moved to be closer to other family members, etc. Mr. Strom asked about any retention strategies the agencies might use, and Ms. Jambor explained they do have strategies they use during the recruitment and interview processes to prepare out of state applicants for the change of moving to Nevada. They are also working on strategies to prevent burnout, as the staff can become overwhelmed with their wide and varied duties. One strategy is to have certain staff members focus on particular areas. She explained that the focus of the organization would remain broad but that individual staff members would focus more narrowly on specific areas of support.

Ms. Jambor also spoke about DHHARC collaborating with Vocational Rehabilitation for reading and independent living programs. They are also focusing on working with youth. Ms. Jambor reported DHHARC will appoint a new supervisor in the Las Vegas office. Mr. Goldman stated that one big issue with turnover of staff could be related to the staff's pay level. Ms. Jambor agreed, saying the workers have smaller salaries compared with other non-profit agencies.

VIII. Discussion and Formulation of a Mission Statement for the Subcommittee*

Ms. Pearl clarified that mission statements generally consist of between 10 and 20 words maximum and then pointed out the text found under the heading "Purpose" of the subcommittee's bylaws is essentially a statement of our mission. She wondered if the committee would want to change the heading to "Purpose and Mission" or "General Mission and Purpose." Ms. Raymond and Ms. Hammond agreed with this approach. Ms. Bennett suggested changing "hearing or speech impaired" to "persons with hearing loss or speech impairment." Mr. Strom suggested the subcommittee ask Howard Rosenbloom, of the National Association of the Deaf, to review the language. Committee members discussed splitting the mission statement from the purpose; and in the mission statement use the words "Communication Disabilities" but in the purpose define that Communication Disabilities could include, but not be limited to the following, and insert a list.

IX. Consider Agenda Items for Next Meeting*

- Discussion of the Subcommittee's Relationships with Other Entities
- Discussion of Service-Related Needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- 2013 Legislation Ideas for Changing the Makeup of the CAC, to Include Ideas Such as Having Representation of Parents on the Subcommittee
- Statistics for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the State, Including How to Capture Those Numbers.
- Addition of Non-Voting Members.

X. Schedule Next Meeting*

Ms. Hammond suggested we meet to discuss budget issues prior to the submission of the Telecommunications Budget to the PUC for FY 13, either in late August or early September. The members agreed to this and stated interest in a face-to-face meeting in October for discussion of other subjects.

XI. Public Comment

(No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item.)

Ms. Bennett shared that she has been appointed to the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Additional comments were shared by members of the public throughout the agenda.

XII. Adjournment*

Having no further business, the subcommittee adjourned at 12:45.

* Denotes items on which action may be taken.
NOTE: Items may be considered out of order.